

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 7, 11, 13 and 19-28 are now present in this application.

The specification and claims 1 and 3 have been amended, and claims 19-28 have been presented. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 7, 8, 11 and 12 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over SUGITO, U.S. Publication No. 2002/0166655, in view of SUZUKI, U.S. Publication No. 2003/0173063. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges that the Examiner considers claims 2-6, 9, 10 and 13-18 to contain allowable subject matter.

It is noted that the limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 2 have been incorporated into independent claim 1. Accordingly, independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 3, 7, 11 and 13 should now be in condition for allowance.

The limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 4 have been combined with independent claim 1 in newly presented independent claim 19. Claims 20-22 correspond to original claims 5, 7, and 11. Accordingly, independent claim 19 and its dependent claims 20-22 should be in condition for allowance.

The limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 6 have been combined with independent claim 1 in newly presented independent

claim 23. This independent claim 23 should be in condition for allowance.

Finally, the limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 14 have been combined with independent claim 1 in newly presented independent claim 24. Claims 25-28 correspond to original claims 15-18. Accordingly, independent claim 24 and its dependent claims 25-28 should be in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims should now be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC 103 rejection are therefore respectfully requested.

Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Because the additional prior art cited by the Examiner has been included merely to show the state of the prior art and has not been utilized to reject the claims, no further comments concerning these documents are considered necessary at this time.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By Joe McKinney Muncy  
Joe McKinney Muncy, #32,334

P.O. Box 747  
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747  
(703) 205-8000

KM/asc  
3313-1034P

(Rev. 02/12/2004)